

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

CHILDREN'S DIVISION

P. O. BOX 88

JEFFERSON CITY, MISSOURI

January 22, 2010

M E M O R A N D U M

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| <p><u>What's Inside:</u> Youth with Elevated Needs</p> |
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TO: REGIONAL EXECUTIVE STAFF, CIRCUIT MANAGERS, AND CHILDREN'S DIVISION STAFF

FROM: PAULA NEESE, DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: YOUTH WITH ELEVATED NEEDS-LEVEL A AND LEVEL B- REVISION OF THE BEHAVIORAL FOSTER CARE AND CAREER PROGRAMS

DISCUSSION:

The purpose of this memorandum is to introduce changes to the Behavioral Foster Care (BFC) and Career Programs. The changes come as a result of a workgroup composed of staff from each of the regions, Regional Directors, resource providers, and staff from Central Office. The goal of the group was to develop a program to improve child stability and well-being, enhance current policy, and standardize the BFC and Career programs statewide. The recommendations from the workgroup resulted in the following changes:

An Improved Title

Foster Care for Youth with Elevated Needs is a program designed for the youth with identifiable and documented moderate or serious emotional and/or behavioral needs. The new name more accurately captures the needs of the child instead of focusing on the negative behaviors. Youth with Elevated Needs-Level A will be the new name for the BFC program and Youth with Elevated Needs-Level B will be the new name for the Career program.

Screening and Assessment of Need

This memorandum also introduces the Youth with Elevated Needs Referral Checklist, CD-136, Youth with Elevated Needs Referral Form, CD-137, and Youth with Elevated Needs Six Month Review Form, CD-138, which will be used statewide in an effort to provide more consistency across the regions. At the time of the initial referral, the Children's Service Worker will complete the Referral Checklist and Referral Form with the required attachments and submit to their supervisor for approval. The referral packet will then be presented at the staffing. The Six Month Review Form will be completed during the six month staffing to determine whether the child continues to meet the criteria for the Youth with Elevated Needs program.

In addition, this memorandum eliminates the use of the Residential Treatment Referral Form, CS-9, as a part of the Youth with Elevated Needs referral packet. Staff will no longer be required to complete the CS-9 when making a referral for a youth with elevated needs.

Staffing Participants

The policy change requires the case manager, supervisor, and designated facilitator (circuit/regional specialist or consultant) to attend the staffing. The designated facilitator is responsible for ensuring that youth staffed for the Youth with Elevated Needs program truly meet the criteria for the program and ensuring that youth are placed in the least restrictive environment as their needs decrease. The list of attendees who should be invited to the staffing was also modified and changed accordingly in the manual. Those who are unable to attend the staffing should be encouraged to submit their input prior to the staffing for consideration.

Competencies

Because some knowledge and skills are essential before children are placed with families, competencies were developed for resource providers of youth with elevated needs. Competencies take into account the knowledge of the resource provider and their ability to perform the necessary skills to successfully parent a youth with elevated needs. The following competencies will assist resource workers in assessing the needs of the resource providers and identifying services to achieve these competencies:

Promote Successful Integration into the Family and the Community

- Understanding how much supervision the youth requires (before placement occurred and during current placement)
- Assist the youth in adjusting to a new school and community
- Transitioning the youth into another setting

Meeting Exceptional Care Needs (for Special Needs and/or Traumatized Youth)

- Addressing those needs that are not developmental (social, emotional, daily care)
- Understanding risk factors in the community, school and home setting
- Understanding but not diagnosing mental illness and other developmental delays

Assessing Crisis Situations and Utilizing Proper Crisis Intervention/Prevention

- Understanding what a crisis is

- Using appropriate skill sets to deescalate crisis situations
- Understanding attention seeking behaviors and knowing when to respond
- Understanding power, authority and control
- Setting fair and consistent limits
- Understanding risk factors in the community, school and home setting

Recognizing and Implementing Positive Approaches to Challenging Behaviors

- Identifying challenging behaviors early
- Clearly defining target behaviors
- Use of multidisciplinary service team for coordinating care
- Team based wrap around services

STARS Training for Staff

[The STARS training for staff](#) was designed to help workers understand the individual needs of the youth and to provide necessary support to resource providers. The training is not mandatory however, the workgroup recommended that licensing workers and staff who work with youth with elevated needs attend the training. Each region will have the discretion to determine when staff attend the training, and who will conduct the training. The training has been posted on the CD intranet and can be modified to fit the individual needs of the staff.

Adoption Subsidy

The policy has not changed with regards to the qualifications for adoption subsidy. Youth with Elevated Needs-Level A can qualify for adoption subsidy however Youth with Elevated Needs-Level B do **not** qualify for adoption subsidy.

Section 4 Chapter 14 and Section 4 Chapter 16 have been updated and combined into [Section 4 Chapter 14](#) to reflect the changes. The changes outlined in this memorandum will be effective as of tomorrow's date.

NECESSARY ACTION

1. Review this memorandum with all Children's Division staff.
2. Review revised Child Welfare Manual chapters as indicated below.
3. All questions should be cleared through normal supervisory channels and directed to:

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| PDS CONTACT Christy Collins (573) 751-9603 Christy.Collins@dss.mo.gov | PROGRAM MANAGER Melody Yancey (573) 751-3171 Melody.Yancey@dss.mo.gov |
| CHILD WELFARE MANUAL REVISIONS Section 4 Chapter 14 Subsection 1 Definition Section 4 Chapter 14 Subsection 2 Referral Process Section 4 Chapter 14 Subsection 3 Selection/Screening Team Section 4 Chapter 14 Subsection 4 Placement Process Section 4 Chapter 14 Subsection 5 Characteristics of a Youth with Elevated Needs Section 4 Chapter 14 Subsection 6 Presenting Problems Displayed by the Youth with Elevated Needs Section 4 Chapter 14 Subsection 7 Children Not Appropriate for Program Section 4 Chapter 14 Subsection 8 Qualifications, Characteristics, and Responsibilities Section 4 Chapter 14 Subsection 9 Ongoing Procedures to Maintain Placement Section 4 Chapter 14 Subsection 10 Periodic Reviews Section 4 Chapter 14 Subsection 11 Termination of Classification | |
| FORMS AND INSTRUCTIONS CD-136 Youth with Elevated Needs Referral Checklist CD-137 Youth with Elevated Needs Referral Form CD-138 Youth with Elevated Needs Six Month Review Form | |
| REFERENCE DOCUMENTS AND RESOURCES N/A | |
| RELATED STATUTE N/A | |
| ADMINISTRATIVE RULE N/A | |
| COUNCIL ON ACCREDITATION (COA) STANDARDS COA Standard for Foster Care Services | |
| CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES REVIEW (CFSR) N/A | |
| PROTECTIVE FACTORS Parental Resilience-N/A Social Connections-N/A Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development-N/A Concrete Support in Times of Need-N/A Social and Emotional Competence of Children-N/A | |
| FACES REQUIREMENTS N/A | |